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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to accomplish several purposes through conceptual analysis, story telling and interpretation, excursions into philosophy, and recent studies of teachers' professional development. First, the paper identifies limitations and confusions in current conceptions of teachers' professional thinking: equating teacher thinking with planning and decision making, and confounding professional choice with personal liberty. These limitations and confusions mislead thought and action in efforts at teacher development and school improvement. Second, in a counterargument, the paper stresses the limits of choice in teaching (as in any social role) and introduces a membership-goodness-obligation theme. The counterargument and theme lead to a broadened conception of teacher thinking that includes contemplation, described as devoted thought that is not deluded. In a third part, to clarify this view of contemplation, the paper draws on stories of professional development and teaching. Fourth, applying the counterargument to the literature on teachers' professional life cycles, the suggestion is made that a distinction exists between focusing on the classroom in the service of the teacher's self ("personal interiority") and focusing on the classroom in the service of teaching and students ("professional interiority"). Only the second form of interiority is held to be consistent with professional development and school improvement. (Author/AMH)

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Margret Buchmann

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Abstract

In its different parts, this paper aims to accomplish several purposes through conceptual analysis, story telling and interpretation, excursions into philosophy and recent studies of teachers' professional development. Firstly, I identify limitations and confusions in current conceptions of teachers' professional thinking and its development: equating teacher thinking with planning and decision-making, and confounding professional choice with personal liberty or simply doing what one likes or believes in. These limitations and confusions mislead thought and action in efforts at teacher development and school improvement. In a counterargument I stress, secondly, the limits of choice in teaching (as in any social role) and introduce a "membership-goodness-obligation" theme. This counterargument and theme lead to a broadened conception of teacher thinking that includes contemplation. I describe and examine, thirdly, contemplation as devoted thought that is not deluded; for purposes of clarification, I draw on stories of professional development and of teaching. I relate this expanded conception of teacher thinking, finally, to current research on teachers' thinking in their professional life cycles. Applying my counterargument to that literature, I suggest making a distinction between focusing on the classroom in the service of the teacher's self ("personal interiority") and focusing on the classroom in the service of teaching and students ("professional interiority"). The second--but not the first--form of "interiority" is consistent with professional development and school improvement.

BEYOND THE LONELY, CHOOSING WILL: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHER THINKING*

Margret Buchmann**

> We are all in the gutter, but some of us
> are looking at the stars.
> [Oscar Wilde, Lady Windermere's Fan]

> The self, the place where we live, is a place
> of illusion. Goodness is connected with the attempt
> to see the unself, to see and respond to the real
> world in the light of a virtuous consciousness.
> [Iris Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good]

What Does Plain Thinking Suggest about Professional Development in the Helping Professions?

Things change. People change. This commonplace of life is part of the meaning of "professional" development, with an important twist. For when researchers and educators speak of development in this sense, they normally exclude the idea of deterioration: of evils multiplying and matters going from worse to worse. This is consistent with common usage, for development is typically conceived as an unfolding in which something grows from a rudimentary condition into a condition that is fuller and higher, or more mature; an absolute presupposition underlying this notion is that whatever develops will not be past redemption or beyond the pale of improvement.

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**Margret Buchmann, professor of teacher education at Michigan State University, is the coordinator of the Conceptual Analysis of Teaching Project. The author dedicates the essay to the memory of the late Marianne Amarel. The author's husband, child, and garden have supported her in her writing. She is grateful to Jennifer Kubanek and Harold Morgan for their assistance in manuscript preparation.

The term "professional" suggests, moreover, an unfolding of positive potentials of no mere contingent, private kind. Instead, potentials falling under the rubric of "professional development" refer to connected ideals of thinking and acting constitutive of social roles, many of which are beneficent. Growing into--and in--such social roles requires living and thinking well and enhances the self and others: This makes it perfectly plain why people care about professional development.

Friendship involves mutual benevolence. Professional roles often do not provide the comforts of balanced equality. In the helping professions, in particular, one person (the professional) is supposed to make other people's (the clients') interests his or her own, while those diverse others do not owe a comparable loyalty in return. School teaching is one of these social roles, in which proper satisfaction derives from regarding the good of others. And, whatever the comparative status of doctors, lawyers, nurses, and teachers in different societies, such roles share the difficult features of a benevolent relationship between persons of unequal knowledge and power. (Inequality also resides in the fact that clients know more about themselves than the people trying to help them do and that they have at least the power to withdraw internally.) In these lines of people-work, intended benefits relate to basic human goods and human flourishing, such as health and well-being, justice and charity, the growth of knowledge and understanding.

Helping other people to human goods and promoting those goods (mostly indirectly) in society at large is the point of these structured relationships, which have elements of altruism built into their foundations. In other words, an active regard for others and devotion to their welfare is part of the <u>meaning</u> of "helping professions." Members of these professions must therefore look beyond the "fat, relentless self," as Iris Murdoch put it, and outflank its

urges and fixations to cultivate virtues such as generosity and kindness, courage and hope, sobriety and gentleness, in the service of others. Love for these general virtues directing thought and for the virtues defining a line of professional work (e.g., in teaching, the love of learning and of spreading learning) is the starting point--not the conclusion--of their practical deliberations. As conceptual points, these statements are true regardless of the actual record of accomplishment that a helping profession or any of its members may have.

Hearing Different Voices in Professional Thinking

One cannot actively desire the good of others without wanting to perform virtuous acts: in wise, rather than foolish, and in skillful, rather than bumbling, ways. Looking after the educational interests of the young and promoting and guarding the rights or health of clients requires a conscientious, discerning mind--hence, a good deal of thought. Yet professionals are for the most part busy people--using tried routines, making on-the-spot decisions, devising and revising plans--troubled by a lack of reliable, relevant knowledge and sometimes half-deafened by the multitude of voices impinging on their work. It is crucial to understand that appropriate thinking in the helping professions is never a monologue--no dramatic composition for a single performer or scene in which a person on stage speaks all by herself.

We might think of the other voices, literally, as the voices of people whose concerns a professional is hearing, which she has heard, or which she can imagine, looking back on experience: a very sick man, his relatives; a child floundering in grade school, her parents; and so on. We can also think of them as the voices of ideals--of general human or specific professional virtues and excellences--materializing with reference to particular situations in a

conscience capable of meditating deeply. For example, a doctor and a teacher might ask themselves:

> In giving comfort, and being evasive, I think I was merciful--or was it just easier for me to make vague, soothing noises rather than to say what I know to be the truth? Would it have served my patient better to be told that there isn't much use in his making plans for next year? Realizing that the end is in view actually improves the quality of some patients' lives, yet people who know themselves to be terminally ill often find that they are avoided, in fear, by others . . .

> I covered a lot about ants today, but how deeply did we really get into the areas where scientists disagree wildly? Doing the homework should alert students to some of those disputes, yet not all will actually get around to doing it--and some will get help at home that others won't get. Should I have taken up the suggestion of Lisa, always ready with her ideas, to compare ant "society" with human society? That was independent thinking--bursting, however, through the boundaries of the subject, and some other kids didn't get the idea, besides . . .

One could say that conscience itself speaks in different voices, existing side by side, in no given order of ranking or harmonious composition:

> Sometimes [conscience] speaks not of right or wrong, of what is just or unjust, but of what is wise, foolish, or skillful. There is, in short, the conscience of craft, and it speaks to us in one of the voices of prudence. But conscience speaks also of our affections, of our relations to others, our ties of membership in some group. There is thus the conscience of membership. Then again, sometimes conscience speaks to us of duty, even against our inclinations. There is, in other words, the conscience of sacrifice. It proclaims the lofty principles of obligation. At other times, conscience calls us to rise above principle and to do the thing that not even duty commands.[1]

In designing and evaluating programs of professional preparation and occasions for professional development, we need to understand how the different consciences of craft, of membership, of sacrifice, and of obligation--and also those of tradition (rootedness) and of imagination or critique--are acquired, and how they may be perfected in their maturity, if they can.[2]

The Glorious Procession That Never Arrives

Hospitality to a multitude of "voices" bearing on one's work is strenuous and people need occasional relief from it. This is particularly true since those voices often materialize to haunt the acting, thinking person who, inescapably, is either falling short of perfection or failing in attention to some good. What marks off the professional from the "chiseler" (the person who "gets by" with minimal efforts, looking out for the self as "number one"), as well as the amateur, appears to have some universality across different endeavors and their attendant excellences. Take a young musician's reflections on perfection in performance in one of Rebecca West's novels:

> I did not expect praise, for that is the prerogative of amateurs, who have a limited objective in view. Once one is a professional musician one's goal is set in infinity. . . . All that one can hope from a professional (even if that be oneself) is an admission that one is in a state of motion, and when this admission is respectful it often takes the paradoxical form of a complaint that one is not moving fast enough. This seems inconsistent, but then to be a professional musician one must . . . [have] . . . a split mind, half of which knows it is impossible to play perfectly, while the other half believes that to play perfectly is only a matter of time and devotion.[3]

Being a professional, she concludes, is walking with others in a "procession that would gloriously never arrive at its destination."[4] What matters is walking in that procession together with others, taking their very denunciations of one's performance as bracing and authentic evidence of craft and normative community.

Trying to act rightly is even more difficult than performing well. Teaching, for instance, routinely involves multiple pairs of obligations--binding claims on one's attention--in which if one is satisfied, the other cannot be. Looking after one student who needs encouragement does not make the teacher's obligation to see to the learning of the whole class disappear. There is no simple answer to the question of how to honor the personal liberty of students

while teaching them academic subjects, since disciplinary arguments must often override personal beliefs. Yet it is very important not to step all over evolving minds. And so on. Philosophical and empirical studies indicate that such multiplying moral dilemmas are "resolved" in interconnected series of imperfect decisions that bypass one horn of each dilemma and deal with any residues in the network later.[5]

If, in the ordinary case of failure of attention to some good in moral life, we are "open to the voice of complaint," William James observes, the "good which we have wounded returns to plague us with interminable crops of consequential damages, compunctions, and regrets."[6] My examples of a doctor's and a teacher's ruminations bear out James's conclusion that

> abstract rules indeed can help; but they help the less in proportion as our intuitions are more piercing, and our vocation is the stronger for the moral life. For every real dilemma is in literal strictness a unique situation; and the exact combination of ideals realized and ideals disappointed which each decision creates is always a universe without a precedent, and for which no adequate previous rule exists.[7]

Tradition-Bound and Experimental Thought

Action in the helping professions hence is, in its very depth, alight with thought: thought of a skilled, considerate, and providing kind that assumes normative membership and human affiliation. This does not mean that a professional's thoughts are always of explicit and home-grown varieties, however, or that issues can be turned over and over in one's mind interminably. Thinking is overtaken by the need to act, and professionals often fall back upon custom, while acting from collectively held assumptions.

The good news is that widespread patterns of behavior and belief may contain a sedimentary wisdom deposited, and enclosed, in dispositions and habits professionals learn by participation and imitation. The bad news is that such invisible thought represents wisdom about past worlds, wisdom that is not

readily available to revision or analysis.[8] Still, plans of action can contain a measure of invention and what happens is, on occasion, analyzed at length. There clearly are submerged, collective, as well as conscious, individual, elements in professional thinking and in the incomplete, fallible knowledge it accumulates over time in precepts, stories, cases, entrancing odd details, and theories, as well as in the tools of the trade.

Rough and ready for the most part, the fabric of professional action is, in brief, enhanced with knotty bits of thinking, here and there, that give people pause. In this fashion, new strands may be introduced, older ones taken up again, and still other lines of thought and action dropped in professional development. Over time, there can be changes of whole patterns: shifts of belief and behavior that are probably less like revolutions than like the slow lateral moving of a riverbed.

If the tough web of custom is constraining, it also is a safety net. For with regard to change, a "profound and tenuous balance" must be secured in institutions such as schools; Green explains why this is so, drawing attention to the possibilities for creating harm that are often overlooked in confident efforts at reform, and making an associated distinction between types of people promoting change:

> [Institutions] must be malleable enough so that good and skillful persons who dream of what is not yet, but might be so, can be set free to decide and to act. But our institutions must also be sufficiently resistant to change so that those whose conscience is merely technical and limited to the skills of managing the political apparatus, but who are rootless in their souls, may not do irreparable harm.[9]

Having sketched in this background against which we can see professional thinking and its development once we "stop and think," let me specify the problem that has prompted this writing about professional development in teacher thinking, with its excursions into stories, medieval and ancient

philosophy, conceptual analysis, literature, and current professional life-cycle studies in teaching. In stating this problem, we are casting our minds to some extent ahead of the point we have reached.

What Seems to Be the Problem?

The problem has thorny aspects difficult to prize apart: overrating and misconceiving choice in the helping professions by putting the self-assertive (often deluded) will at its center; misrepresenting intentional activity that aims at goodness in a segmented fashion that mimicks the linear logic of theoretical reasoning and ignores the essential connectedness of actions and people; and confusing professional autonomy with personal freedom, thereby adding force to the presumptions of the individual will and its airy rationality. These aspects are thrown into relief by the background established earlier and discussed by invoking a kind of thinking more true to professional practice.

Misconceiving Action and Rationality in the Good Life of a Professional

Contrary to what one might think in visualizing "profession," the lonely, choosing will and its private determinations--its particularistic directions of purpose and intentions, authoritative conclusions and decisions, as well as patterns arising from those determinations--stand currently in the limelight of a literature tending to present teacher thinking as a series of self-arguments, largely cut off from institutional contexts.[10]

However, given the distinctive responsibilities of the helping professions for looking after basic human goods and seeing to it that designated people flourish, thinking about ends--at the level of a profession's principal aims and concerns--means attending to ends that are no matter of personal choosing. Such careful attention precedes and, sometimes, preempts choice, while bringing

to light realities that determine significance and guide action. Given the "iron requirements of loyalty," a person's most important choice is entering a helping profession.[11]

Underlying the emphasis on decisions is an image of intentional activity "as a set of actions, each of which is a response to a definite situation, as a statement may be an answer to a definite question."[12] This image veils the fact that professionals create lives in concert with others, within continuous fabrics of personal and institutional being. At all levels of action, "policy is not a matter of solving one problem and then, having wiped the slate clean, addressing the next."[13] Moreover, in choice that is professional and not just personal, the open-ended, but rooted, many-sided conversation of practice resonates to a given form of the good life in <u>defining</u> what the situation is that calls for decision.

For teaching, this conversation of practice invokes criteria of direction and connection in a vision of the good, in the interrelatedness of actions and people (in their distinct realities), in the structures of the disciplines, and in the rule and role requirements of the place we call "school." All these "externals" notwithstanding, there is a central place for the person in professional roles. To quote F. H. Bradley's wonderfully direct words, as he summarizes people's ordinary conception of responsibility, "a man must act himself, be now the same man who acted, have been himself at the time of the act, have had sense enough to know what he was doing, and to know good from bad."[14]

In their different ways, the identity of persons and "external" criteria function as significant realities that, apprehended wholeheartedly, support and direct, at times confound, professional thought and action. Like the voices of conscience, these substantive criteria are not combined or adapted to one another so as to form a consistent and comfortable whole.[15] Careful attention to

these realities in no way stifles professional thought and development; to the contrary, it is energizing: attaching people to what is best in themselves and others and inviting the growth of practical wisdom. For, on an Aristotelian view that common sense will underwrite readily,

> a person can only successfully plan to lead a virtuous life if he is able to make extremely difficult decisions. In order to take account of the demands of all the virtues and to deal adequately with the uncertainty of the future and the peculiarity of his own circumstances he must engage in lengthy deliberations that yield no easy answers.[16]

Teachers, doctors, and lawyers, in sum, are people who make decisions, but there are stringent limits to their creativity, which consists more in choosing activities so that one will encounter opportunities and can cultivate abilities for acting on ideals than in discovering them--like some newly found islands--or causing them to exist.[17] I find it hard to disagree with William James's pungent remark that "surely it would be folly quite as great, in most of us, to strike out independently and to aim at originality in ethics as in physics."[18]

The logical and moral priority of ideals and realities supporting a form of the good life highlights the vital function of attention--of devoted thought that avoids delusions--in professional thinking and the development of its proper rationality, which is not "airy" at all, but a value rationality of substance: It is the end that counts. Attention has a vital function because it sustains the good life of a professional, imparts vigor to that life, and keeps its course directed toward what is essential. One could say, then, that goodness requires a soul that quickens to reality. I will now look at these issues from a different, though related, angle: the rights of professionals rather than the conception of their thoughts and actions.

Confusing Professional Autonomy with "Empty" Personal Freedom

In his treatment of rights and roles, Fried maintains that the realm of

excellence is the realm of freedom.[19] This is also true for professional roles, for, as we have already seen, once people devote themselves to the principal ends of a profession in loyalty to designated persons, there are few rules that can be followed rigidly or orders of the good plainly available as "read-outs" from the data. But it does not follow that personal willing is the decisive or characteristic feature of professional thinking. Hence Fried circumscribes and fills out that freedom in an argument whose institutional and moral aspects are two sides of the same coin.

When people enter a profession, they walk into institutions, acquiring, in 19th-century terms, "a station and its duties." Embedded in a larger social order, that position with its obligations fills up one's life by its reality and, still more, by its spirit.[20] Take the profession of law: "The lawyer is the client's legal friend, and thus his duties and privileges arise out of the occasion and the institution that created the role."[21] The freedom that remains is neither empty nor personal. Granted that "self-realization" has its attractions, the overriding concern in professional thinking--appealing, in Green's terms, to the consciences of craft, membership, obligation, tradition, imagination, perhaps of sacrifice[22]--is fidelity to professional ends and to those people who actually are one's clients.[23]

In the institutional and moral strains of Fried's argument, there is an implicit notion of obedience, of compliance with principle and moral authority, suggesting that professional action, and moral action in general, may be less occasioned by making up one's mind (as when one decides whom to marry) than by bending thought and feeling toward the right objects of attention (as when one lives faithfully in the married state). Fried accordingly subordinates personal freedom to the ethical requirements of professional roles. In these roles, people "are at liberty to construct their lives out of what personal

scraps and shards of motivation their inclination and character suggest--idealism, greed, curiosity, love of luxury, love of adventure or knowledge--as long as they do indeed give wise and faithful counsel."[24]

A fascination with the lonely, choosing will, with "creativity" and uniqueness (perhaps more typical for education as a younger, ahistorical field prone to fantasies than for the classic professions of medicine and law) can overlap into narcissistic motivations for innovation and self-expression having very little to do with professional autonomy or development. In the helping professions, personal freedom and self-realization are not goods in themselves, but only insofar as pursuing one's autonomy and self-realization leads to benefits for clients. These benefits ought to be the touchstone of plans, choices, and satisfactions alike.

As I have written elsewhere, the teacher educator slogans of "finding the technique that works for you," "discovering your own beliefs," and "being creative and unique" are therefore seductive half-truths.[25] They are seductive because anyone likes to be told that being oneself and doing one's own thing is all right, even laudable. These slogans are half-truths, since teacher action, though perhaps rarely unique, is ineluctably personal. Teaching affects the inner self and the self as it appears to others, as well as those others and the course of one's life--in which the personal and the professional spheres, although distinguished in thought, exist in real unity.

Hence there is nothing metaphysical about maintaining that one cannot adequately understand professional thinking without introducing persons, persons who lead lives: "There are persons, they exist; persons lead lives, they live; and as a result, in consequence--in consequence, that is, of the way they do it--there are lives, of which those who lead them may, for instance, be proud, or feel ashamed."[26] In giving reasons for pride or shame, teachers, doctors,

and lawyers must, however, resist a confusion of personal and professional spheres. Put differently, the justification of their actions should not be interpreted as an account of personal motives only. What we need to hear, instead, are reasons taking "profession" as their court of appeal.

Together with the arguments I have already advanced, this line of thought supports the contention that professionals do not live (and improve) their moral life by following their fancy, or even by planning good works alone. They must think in many ways: clarifying and sorting out the contents of their minds to determine what they ought to keep in mind, and holding their attention steady in contemplating worthy objects of attachment that are given as a generative background for virtuous action.

Different Ways of Looking in Professional Thinking

Like storytelling, thinking is part of our human inheritance. Though not well understood, it is an ordinary experience. We think because we are human, and if a friend tells us to think, we do not ask a specialist, "How do I do that?" People's ordinary conception of thinking includes many internal processes not necessarily related to action or decision, such as appreciating, clarifying, marvelling, imagining, remembering, agonizing, pondering, conceiving, wondering, and interpreting. The metaphor of looking stands out in different processes of thinking: Planning is looking ahead; remembering is looking back; "holding in regard" is looking at something or someone in affection, admiration, or wonder. In conceiving or imagining, we picture ideas, events, or scenes and gaze at them internally. Nor is the "reflection" ubiquitous in discussions of professional thinking inconsistent with the metaphor of looking.

Looking Backward so as not to Be Improvident

Reflection is a looking backward in hopes that light will be thrown by thought upon experience. In the concept of reflection we have, therefore, the element of looking combined with associations from how we think in physics about the action of heat and light. One reflects in order to see something that is not available to simple looking but requires the mirror of mind. What distinguishes reflection from memory is the hope is that turning back upon oneself and the past will improve foresight.[27]

Reflection is a kind of thinking people do engage in or that they are disposed to entertain; that is, "reflection" is a mental activity as well as a faculty or bent of mind which people may or may not have or develop. Some scholars think that reflection must lead to a critique of society and its institutions; others interpret reflection as thinking about means or the techniques and procedures of action; and still others think that reflection ought to be concerned with the rightness of practical ends in deliberation. Of course, even procedures and means require moral deliberation--as a careful consideration with a view to decision--since means employed in action affect not only the efficiency and quality of professional relations but can detract from or conflict with the ends-in-view.

The question of the compass of reflection relates to questions of its relative distance from the self and from action, and of its transformative goals. To what extent does reflection actually lead to changing things about what one does and believes oneself, about the profession, or about what people (vaguely but accusingly) call "the system"? Is reflection, by definition, removed from action, or can it erupt, in brief spurts, in professional activity itself? Reflection in the helping professions is special, for it is entwined with kindly, providing foresight, with wise and prudent arrangement and guidance,

anticipating and preparing for the future of <u>others</u>. Hence a secular version of "providence," of the foreknowing, beneficent care and government of God--of benevolent direction, control, and guidance--seems associated with the concept of reflection in these lines of work. This association opens the door to self-aggrandizing fantasies that are treacherous.

In any case, there can be no providence without looking at the past; Green argues that this is a point of logic and of learning:

> The actual presence of providence, which, by origins, refers to a "looking forward," can be learned, in the sense of "discerned" in one's life, only by looking backward. . . . The moral virtues generally require experience--in particular, experience in human affairs. It is only in looking backward that we can discern how things work and how things have worked out.[28]

Hearing different "voices"--stemming from people's manifold concerns and realities, from the multiple, conflicting goods to be discerned in situations, and from consciences commenting upon conduct from different directions--also depends on having a past to look at: a past that one has, however, not just undergone but made available to thought.

The question is how, through experience, teaching, and thinking, one's mind can be formed and made richly responsive, so that kindly, providing foresight--with a dash of humility--can be developed and deepened in the helping professions. It goes without saying that we are talking here less of raw beginners than of people moving into spheres of personal and professional maturity. It is also clear that what is involved in this move is not just knowledge or dispositions but the particular arts and skills we describe, and unjustly disparage, as professional techniques.

Although our intentions may be all that is ever truly good, it is carrying good intentions into effect that makes a difference for others. Professional techniques can be profoundly complex and, as already noted, they do not come

attached with rules for their proper use in particular cases. The question of propriety--of rightness, justness, or conformity to principle--cannot be sidestepped by reference to efficiency: Things are not good because they work. Situations calling for definition and action similarly fail to come inscribed, as it were, with all the concerns that had better be heard. Determinations of utility are no substitute for penetrating moral intuitions, and they are question-begging besides, for serviceableness has no value in itself but only insofar as the ends of action are worthy.

A quiet, absorbed kind of looking at what there is, rather than looking forward or backward in planning and reflection, can be a guide for the perplexed in such conundrums of practice. As "careful vision," the idea of contemplative thought expands prevalent notions of valuable thinking in the helping professions, while indicating an answer to the question of what the more busy processes of thought may themselves refer to for support and guidance.[29]

Devoted Thought That Is not Deluded

Contemplation is a kind of thinking that--remote from action and the will--looms large in ancient and medieval philosophy, while also having a place in people's everyday conception of thinking. Aquinas discusses the active and the contemplative lives in Summa Theologiae, where he also examines the question to which form of life teaching might belong.[30] In the active life, people aim to affect things or other people and are often ruffled by their recalcitrance. The contemplative life may involve a kind of application in cogitation or meditation. But contemplation is the point where activity comes to rest; its essential qualities are those of a wonder-struck beholding, as we attend to some desirable or lovable good--especially any truth whatever--and dwell on it. This requires clarity of vision and serenity.

Contemplation sets aside ties to self-involved willing and feeling, to given ways of thinking and schemes of action, substituting a careful attention that neither exploits the object of thought nor takes it for granted. (Note that "object" must not be confused with "thing": An object of attention is simply that toward which our attention is directed.) This process of thinking engages the emotions and the will only insofar as these dispose one towards peace and purity of heart, and help one direct one's attention to worthy objects. Via fidelity--faithfulness to others, and to what there is--truth and goodness converge in a contemplative experience that need not be other-worldly.

The priority of contemplation. Though the active and the contemplative lives can be distinguished, both are forms of human life, and in an actual existence now the one, now the other form, will predominate. And it is possible for action to lead to contemplation and for contemplation to lead to action: Both forms of life are complementary. In accordance with most medieval authors, however, Aquinas maintains that the contemplative is superior to the active life. He stresses that the "return to the active life from the contemplative is by way of direction, in that the active life is guided by the contemplative";[31] divorced from contemplation, the active life would be cut off from its source of value.[32] If action is "shown the way" by contemplation, to which action, as a derivative, must refer back, we may conclude that (professional) practice begins and ends in contemplative thought.

Aquinas concludes that teaching sometimes belongs to the active life and sometimes to the contemplative life. Yet in moving from contemplation to action we do not subtract the contemplative but add the active dimension. Teaching is not a life of action tempered by occasional fits of abstraction,

but, in the words of Saint Thomas, the active life in teaching "proceeds from the fullness of contemplation."[33]

A kind of internal gazing and admiring wonder, rather than mere utility or conformity to desire, may be the spring from which the meaning and comparative worth of our actions and insights originate. This conclusion implies a notion that we have already encountered, namely, that action attends upon--even obeys--careful vision, as a kind of observance. It is not difficult to apply this claim to work in the helping professions. In teaching, for instance, thought and action need to flow from--and return to--raising one's sights to people (primarily students) and teaching subjects; and thought and action without reference to the ultimate good of learning would be without rudder. To further demonstrate that applicability and develop our understanding, I will relate various stories that bear on people's development in careful vision.

Stories in Professional Development

I am drawing on stories in this essay because stories are appropriate and helpful, including lifelike complications of characters and events, of intellectual and moral plights, that other treatments of professional development miss.[34] Stories make us think about shared "mortal questions" in compelling but not coercive ways. Such narrative accounts allow one to picture things and to turn them over in the mind: Stories call on us for interpretations that can be renewed.[35] A few cautions are in order, though. Part of the reason why stories are engaging and intrinsically related to "development" stems from presuppositions, and implicit intents, that the story <u>form</u> shares with the <u>concept</u> of development. Recall the customary interpretation of development in terms of evolution, or the successive emergence of higher and better, or more mature, states and characteristics. This interpretation of change is

comforting. But it obscures (perhaps even blinds one to) the idea and reality of loss and of other tragic or meaningless aspects of change.

Contrast the meliorism of the accepted developmental view with the moral of the story of youth and age. When people tell this story, they recount the getting of wisdom, at a cost. The Aristotelian virtue of "greatness of soul"--composed of noble simplicity and trust, high hopes and courage, readiness for pity and for seeing the good in others-- diminishes with experience. Humbled by life, less fond of laughter, much less transparent, less generous and high-minded, middle age finds many of us more knowing and milder in judgment but also "smaller of soul."[36]

If they are not always redemptive, stories are patterned and complete. "Any story which we tell about ourselves," Iris Murdoch reminds us, "consoles us since it imposes pattern upon something which might otherwise seem intolerably chancy and incomplete."[37] There is a further reason for caution in using stories in a discussion of professional development. Particular stories, like metaphors, leave things out of the picture and, through their chosen perspectives, are a partial (limited and potentially biased) representation of what one tries to illuminate. Still, how we come to endow experience with deepening meaning is a question that the storyteller shares with educators wishing to understand and encourage development in professional thinking.

Looking at Persons

How often do we look at people? When asking this question, I do not mean just staring them in the face, or taking them in with a passing glance, but really looking, in an effort at acknowledgment and just discernment that stops us in our tracks and grants the other person as much reality as we and our projects have to ourselves. The answer is quite rarely--so rarely that, in the

first legend of the Holy Grail, the miraculous vessel was supposed to go to the first comer, on one condition only.

The Grail was being guarded by a king, almost completely paralyzed by a painful wound. The first person who would notice that guardian and ask the sufferer, truly meaning it, "What are you going through?" was to be rewarded with the mystical treasure. As Simone Weil tells this story, she does not say who got the Grail, or where it is now.[38] What is left unsaid, as in many stories, tacitly invites the reader "to fill in the blanks," thus magnifying and deepening significance.[39] We suspect that the treasure is still wherever it was, eternally sought and put out of reach by people's incapacity to give attention to another human being. Receiving and giving attention is a miracle--a marvelous event occurring within human experience.

What keeps one from seeing other people with accuracy and kindness are not only the "anxious avaricious tentacles of the self,"[40] but the categories and judgments in terms of which we see other people, and that serve as organs of seeing and feeling. Another story, part of the novel by Rebecca West from which I have already quoted, illuminates the relations between accuracy and transcendence and between truth and beauty in just discernment.

Picture a family, poor in every worldly sense, in which artistic capacities are joined to piercing and subtly toned emotions and an unspoken, utter regard for truth and honor. Life brings that family together with two not very successful barmaids, Queenie and "Aunt" Lily; these two sisters come to be what Goethe called "elective affinities." As a violinist who has risen to fame, one of the family members recounts her observations of one of their strange "relations":

> Aunt Lily talked facetiously and sentimentally and tritely all day long. Until Queenie had met the affectionate and tiresome man who had married her. . . , the two sisters had been barmaids, and not at the

> height of their profession. They had wandered in a defeated continent of the vulgar world, where vulgarity had lost its power and its pride, and had to repeat old jokes because it could no longer invent new ones, and speak of virtues in phrases so worn by use that they gave the same feeling of want as rags. Too often, listening to Aunt Lily's conversation was like having emptied at one's feet a dustbin full of comic songs and jokes from pantomimes, catchwords which had not even that flimsy bond with sense, and protestations about being ready to share one's last crust with a friend and saying what one meant to people's faces instead of behind their backs. Yet if one gave up the idea of direct communication with her, and put what she said with what she did, and let time fit them into a mosaic, the pattern was beautiful. Though what she said when she was at ease was usually inaccurate and humbugging, when there was much at issue she was candid. She knew that falsity destroyed what was of real value.[41]

This evocative, detailed description is not all moonshine and roses. Nor is it an account of a transformation in Lily. It is the narrator who grows by looking and clarifying her vision of the unity in the person confronting her. In examining what it means to look at art, Iris Murdoch seems to respond to this passage; she writes that "what is learnt here is something about the real quality of human nature, when it is envisaged, in the artist's just and compassionate vision, with a clarity which does not belong to the self-centered rush of ordinary life."[42]

One does not have to be an artist, or an expert of any kind, to attend to another person in a fashion productive of moral change in the person doing the looking. But it is difficult to imagine how one can think and work well in the helping professions without that quality of attention, enabling one to see and hear one's clients distinctly. The step from the quest for the Holy Grail to professional development is therefore not as large as it might seem. This can be shown by drawing on still other stories.

Looking at Clients

Going back to the beginnings of his life as a psychiatrist, Robert Coles describes his professional learning in terms of developing a certain quality

and direction of attention, concluding that the issue "was not only whether a doctor trained in pediatrics and child psychiatry might help a child going through a great deal of social and racial stress, but what the nature of my attention ought to be."[43] How, in short, was he to use his mind? As a novice, Coles was well aware of his lack of knowledge, a strong command of various theories and classification schemes notwithstanding. His first response to the demands of dealing with live patients was mobilizing social authority: Whatever his shortcomings in maturity and competence, he could get a nurse to bring a patient to him. His second response, encouraged by a supervisor admired as a brilliant theorist, was to establish (almost aggressively and rather quickly) conceptual control of the situation. Yet Coles was quick to sense the "protective function of theory"; having acquired an "intellectual fix" on what happened during "therapeutic" sessions,

> I often found myself feeling less afraid for myself, if not for the patient. I now "knew" her, and I could look forward to yet another chance to listen, to inquire, to hear confirmed what I'd been taught. As for the occasional moments of doubt and worry (Why isn't she getting any better?), my supervisor had some analgesic words.[44]

Less inclined to soothe the young doctor's pains, another supervisor "encouraged a gentler tone, a slower pace, a different use of the mind."[45] Listening to the novice more than talking himself--although not hesitant to teach pointedly at times--this older doctor encouraged a shift from classifications and theories to concrete patients and their stories, asking questions like, Do you see her in your mind? or, Did you stop and wonder what he's now going through? Implicitly, this supervisor was asking, Whose words matter? Who is to appropriate the word "interesting"? In a brief lecture that Coles was to hear in his head many times over the course of his career, this doctor put his meaning plainly:

> The people who come to see us bring us their stories. They hope they tell them well enough so that we understand the truth of their lives.

> They hope we know how to interpret their stories correctly. We have to remember that what we hear is their story.[46]

The younger doctor struggling to learn began to discover the power of really looking and of listening to patients' stories "with a minimum of conceptual static";[47] this shift in quality and direction of attention was accompanied by a partial reversal of roles, for people troubled in mind now became his teachers. In the case of his first, disturbing patient, this attention worked a miracle: stopping a restless "phobic" in her tracks, revealing her reality and the reality of her fears, as well as giving the professional learner in the encounter a sense that he might help her.

It is illuminating to consider how Coles describes this shift. Having been nudged in its direction for a while by the supervisor with an ear for stories, he took the plunge into another mode of being with his patient in a moment of frustration. The decision was momentous in every sense of the word. Made in an instant, it seemed rather like taking a turn down some lane one has heard of, yet never followed, when the path one has been plodding along gets more and more muddy. This turn had great consequence and moving force. It highlights the normative, systemic features of actions taken that are obscured by the linear and segmented "question/answer/next question, please" model of intentional activity. In the words of Israel Scheffler,

> For every decision inevitably reverberates outward, spills beyond the bounds of the problem, no matter how initially conceived. It creates precedents, activates analogies with the past, helps to form, strengthen, or modify a general style, a set of norms that newly influence criteria of consistency in action.[48]

Note that the professional knowledge of the second supervisor centrally includes an understanding of the value of the pretheoretical, an understanding which, among other things, implies turning one's back on any power-conscious and defensive use of expert knowledge in the helping professions.

This psychiatrist accomplished a movement of return in the service of profession: recognizing and reestablishing a shared humanity in the form and content of stories, and the occasion for telling and listening to them.

I will further explore the power of attention by adapting a story from Iris Murdoch (about the inner progress of a mother in her feelings toward her unsuitable daughter-in-law) to show how a careful vision of others maintains the teacher's craft.[49] The case in point is followed by a counterexample from fiction. Both stories have developmental themes: One concerns a teacher's moral change in thinking about a student; the other portrays a teacher at her prime, presumably the period and state of greatest professional maturity and relative perfection. These cases turn on kinds and qualities of teacher thinking and shed light on backgrounds of attachment that occasion action.

Seeing concrete persons in teaching. Suppose a secondary English teacher, Miss Jacobs, feels herself affected by a sense of hostility toward a student. From the first day of school, John grates on his teacher's feelings. He strikes her as uncouth in behavior and raw in intellect, overfamiliar and moody--always tiresomely adolescent. Miss Jacobs herself is a quiet person, a bit spinsterish and severe but intelligent and well-intentioned. She knows that she is not at her best with boys of that age; in general, she has to admit that she does not like adolescents. A term passes. But the teacher does not perfect her view of John as an impossible boy, firming it up in outline and elaborating it in detail; that is, she does not make her aversive picture of this student more impenetrable and solid.

Miss Jacobs instead has come to see John as endearingly awkward; his raw intellect has become, in her eyes, an untutored intelligence a teacher should see as a challenge. John seems to her now not overfamiliar and excitable but trusting and emotional to the point of being vulnerable. Protective, almost

tender, feelings supplant her earlier hostility. What has happened? John has not changed; he is still a rather pestilential adolescent. Nor has Miss Jacobs been busy in any external sense, or drawn up plans to change him. On the surface, Miss Jacobs has substituted one set of (moral) words for another, with positive instead of negative meaning. But, deep down, she has been thinking, attentively, until she could see this student in a light that was clearer and more just.

A change of vision can be a delusion. But let us further suppose that Miss Jacobs has looked at John (beyond the stereotype), and has concentrated her attention on him (away from her own sensitivities and limitations), achieving an inward stance and progress of intrinsic worth and attraction that does student and teacher good. Part of this progress stems from setting aside self-centered feelings together with conventional and self-protective modes of classification; the greater part, however, stems from seeing John not just with accuracy but with kindness as a concrete person.

In this fashion, Miss Jacobs has come to see much more of John's traits and aspirations, some of which are repeated in other adolescents, but which she attends to "not as pieces of something homogeneous that turns up in many places in the universe, but as forming the essential core of what that concrete person is."[50] There is John's generosity of heart and his impotent wish to see the world set right, which surface in awkwardness and mood swings. Why do adults, who act so god-like and knowing, make such a mess of things, what with atomic bombs, famines, and divorces?

As Miss Jacobs feels John's accusing eyes on herself, she has to admit that she does not understand it either. She also knows that she would prefer to be seen less as a representative of the pretentious and floundering tribe of grown-ups and more as herself: imperfect but real. Still, she realizes that

it may not be in John's power, now, to fulfill that wish; nor is it his duty to do so. Through thinking, Miss Jacobs prepares herself to be loyal to John in her professional role, becoming attached to what is most excellent in him and choosing to make his good (as a learner) her own.

Iris Murdoch summarizes this stance and process in the concept of "attention," a form of contemplation central to the thought of the philosopher-mystic Simone Weil. This process of thinking opens one's mind to seeing another person as an individual, worthy of regard--in the sense of observant attention and kindly feeling. In this way of looking, to quote Simone Weil, the "soul empties itself of all its own contents in order to receive into itself the being it is looking at, just as he is, in all his truth."[51] Though it requires being simple, attentive perception is not easy; it is one's infinitely perfectible vision of other people and the love of their truth--their individuality, separate and distinct from ourselves, to which we owe due regard.

Perhaps, when teachers tell us that they decided to go into teaching because they love children, some mean loving to look at children attentively--holding them in regard. No matter of merely opening one's eyes, careful vision is related to loyalty:

> Loyalty . . . is an idealizing of human life, a communion with invisible aspects of our social existence. Too great literalness in the interpretation of human relations is, therefore, a foe to the development of loyalty. If my neighbor is to me merely a creature of a day, who walks and eats and talks and buys and sells, I shall never learn to be loyal to his cause and to mine.[52]

The case of a teacher loyal to no cause but her own should further elucidate the place of contemplation in the helping professions.

Being blinded by self-centered aims. Like Miss Jacobs, the teacher in Muriel Spark's novel, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, is an intelligent spinster, amiable in her way. Professing truth, beauty, and goodness, she lacks,

however, compassion and does not seem to care about history or arithmetic, either, teaching the girls in her charge her fantasies of love and self instead. Unlike Miss Jacobs, this teacher is supremely sure of her ground in everything and relentless in her egotism. "Give me," Miss Brodie says, "a girl at an impressionable age, and she is mine for life."[53]

History lessons turn into personal stories. A long division at the blackboard serves as cover for instruction in the subject of Miss Brodie, who sees herself as extraordinary (and other teachers, by inference, as generally beneath her notice), taking pains to make herself adorable to her pupils. While most of the girls still count on their fingers at the age of 10, they have had, she feels, at least the benefits of her travel experiences--never mind their qualifying exams for Senior school. Asked, "Who is the greatest Italian painter?" a girl replies, "Leonardo da Vinci"; her teacher dismisses this answer: "That is incorrect. The answer is Giotto, he is my favourite."[54]

"Her" girls try to take the classics rather than modern languages because of Miss Brodie's preferences, which stand regardless of children. Of course, not all girls in the class belong to the "Brodie set." Hers are the brighter ones, remarkable for looks or a talent to amuse her--the "leaven" in a "lump" otherwise rather contemptible. Miss Brodie makes these special ones "her vocation"; that is, she trains them up in her confidence, in her image. They are "the best" to the extent that they grow to be like her. In eerie confirmation, a painter who has fallen for Miss Brodie portrays them all in her likeness.

Miss Brodie can see these children only through the lens of her own self and needs; their perspectives do not exist for her. Thus she herself is deceived and liable to be betrayed. Adolescents may act in ways conforming to some glittering idol, but that does not mean that they have lost their individual, still somewhat childlike, selves. For instance, a girl Miss Brodie has

cast in a steamy romance in the manner of D. H. Lawrence wants little more of life than to go to the movies now and get a husband later.

Life does not fail to provide this teacher with chances for second thoughts. As the Brodie set enters Senior school, they are at first refreshed by the air of thought; dazzled by new subjects, the girls communicate their sense of intellectual adventure to Miss Brodie:

> Their days were now filled with unfamiliar shapes and sounds which were magically dissociated from ordinary life, the great circles and triangles of geometry, the hieroglyphics of Greek on the page and the various curious hisses and spits some of the Greek sounds made from the teacher's lips--"psst . . . psooch."[55]

The girls respond with eager enthusiasm (one of Miss Brodie's appealing characteristics) to the new learnings; they lack, however, the intellectual and moral seriousness that is part of caring for a subject (dispositions absent in their teacher):

> Rose Stanley sliced a worm down the middle with the greatest absorption during her first term's biology, although in two terms' time she shuddered at the thought and had dropped the subject. Eunice Gardiner discovered the Industrial Revolution, its rights and wrongs, to such an extent that the history teacher, a vegetarian communist, had high hopes of her which were dashed within a few months when Eunice reverted to reading novels based on the life of Mary Queen of Scots.[56]

Hence, in due time, Miss Brodie resumes her sway over the girls. This teacher cannot bear the thought that "any of her girls should grow up not largely dedicated to some vocation."[57] Just as she feels dedicated to her set, they must all become dedicated women. What makes a mockery of her sincerity is that Miss Brodie--praising insight, spiritual vision, and the surrender of self in the service of others--is unseeing and unyielding. Lacking an accurate sense of herself and being incapable of seeing others as they are, she cannot learn from children how to teach them. She appeals to the young and fends off institutional expectations with considerable success. She is unconventional and attractive in her zest for life and culture. But she cuts herself off from her

colleagues and from any chance to learn from experience. The loneliness of the private world that she carries into the classroom aggravates the delusions of Miss Brodie's will, which lead to her downfall in the end. And we do pity her.

The trouble with this person occupying the position of a teacher is not lack of keenness in intellect or feeling. She has desires and anxieties like the rest of us, only perhaps more fervent. She does not fail to think, to plan, or to make decisions; in fact, she is an accomplished Machiavellian: managing people by their weaknesses and affections and shrewdly judging the limits of the principal's power in trying to make her change her ways. The trouble with Jean Brodie is with the contents of her mind and the direction of her energies. She is attracted to the classroom as a theatre of self and her regard for the Brodie set is an expression of self-love. In one frightening moment, one of the girls sees herself and other students, "in unified compliance to the destiny of Miss Brodie, as if God had willed them to birth for that purpose."[58]

This woman neither fills out the position of a teacher with its spirit and reality, nor is her prime that of professional development. Trapped in her hungry self, the reality of others escapes Miss Brodie, together with the ideals of her profession. Her story illustrates how false beliefs and personal fantasies stand in the way of goodness in the private and the professional spheres, and it gives credence to the claim of Iris Murdoch that:

> Morality, goodness, is a form of realism. The idea of a really good man living in a private dream world seems unacceptable. Of course a good man may be infinitely eccentric, but he must know certain things about his surroundings, most obviously the existence of other people and their claims. The chief enemy of excellence in morality . . . is personal fantasy: the tissue of self-aggrandizing and consoling wishes and dreams which prevents one from seeing what is there outside one.[59]

Miss Brodie may seem extraordinary, but her story fits with patterns of choice and thought observed among North American teachers today, many of whom treat their work as an extension of self, encouraged to do so by institutions hospitable to private entrepreneurship in teaching.[60]

From Stories to Studies and Conceptual Distinctions in Professional Development

It is a mistake to assume that what is most personal is also most profound and most reliable as a source of energies; the self often moves in a vain circle. Seeing the choosing will as splendid in its isolation is a misconception about human nature. We must therefore be careful not to misconstrue or overestimate the place of personal freedom in the helping professions. The focus on the decisions and planning of professionals reflects a trend characteristic of (Western) modernity with its belief in the lonely, choosing will: its airy freedom and supposed control of the world through formal knowledge.[61]

If they are to understand and develop beneficial potentials for thought, however, researchers and educators will have to broaden their ideas and question their preconceptions. Some of these preconceptions stem from researchers' limited views of valuable thinking--views inconsistent with the breadth of ordinary conceptions--others from popular confusions of professional autonomy with doing what one likes and happens to believe in. These confusions are reinforced by researchers and educators to the extent that they share their conceptual frameworks with popular culture. Here clarification helps.

There is no paradox in claiming that (professional) thinking which advances human flourishing is not always or necessarily related to action and decision. Devoted thought that is not deluded directs and supports the comprehensive practical life--that is, a life including in its compass not only the daily grind but ultimate goods, not merely the self but others, thus a life full in

mental scope and attachments. My case for contemplation is based on a concept of practice in which truth and goodness converge. This collective, moral concept invokes ideals of perfection and significant realities: constitutive fidelities of teaching that are made available in contemplation.

How may this careful vision be related to teachers' lives in reality? First, contemplation needs "world enough, and time." Youthful beginners will not have enough food for thought. They may also be too preoccupied with personal, practical, and theoretical issues to see what confronts them, although it does seem possible to nudge them in the right direction. Just because some concerns carry more personal or affective change, it does not follow that other concerns--less immediately compelling to the novice--cannot be thought about.[62]

My second point is related to the first. Although time is essential, it would be glib and misleading to say that "the fullness of contemplation" comes in "the fullness of time." Change is natural, and the cyclical movement from life to death has its correlates in character and mental life. But some of that change is also a decline in hope and generosity, resulting in a "smaller soul." Hence "professional development"--in the honorific sense that common usage attaches to both parts of this term--will not just happen. We have to distinguish teacher change from professional development.

The Different Meanings of "Tending One's Own Garden"

As people approach the later phases of their personal and professional lives, there is a leitmotif that seems compatible with contemplation in the service of profession. What Michael Huberman observed among Swiss teachers, for instance, is a staple of the life-cycle literature: "a trend towards greater 'interiority,' . . . a redirecting of energies, a more inward-turning

cathexis."[63] In its joint consideration of teachers' lives and school improvement (as institutional reform), this research helps to crystallize my conclusions.

Among the 160 secondary teachers whose professional lives he studied, Huberman identified, on the whole, a sense of disenchantment and withdrawal in the aftermath of institutional reforms.[64] These Swiss teachers were distinguished by the emotional quality of their withdrawal into the classroom. Those who focused defensively on "their own gardens" seemed unhappy, embittered, and disapproving. Others withdrew with a sense of optimism, focusing positively

> on a preferred grade level, subject matter, or pupil type; disinvesting in schoolwork and increasing outside interests; reducing contacts with peers other than those of one's most convivial group; avoiding additional administrative tasks or off-hour commitments; and not getting involved in future schoolwide innovations."[65]

These teachers felt authorized--finally--to do as they pleased.

Because of this "self-actualization" theme, the generic trend toward interiority needs sorting out beyond Huberman's distinction between "positive" and "defensive" focusing. "Pulling back" to cultivate one's own garden after forays into the larger world can mean investing oneself more in teaching. The "inward-turning cathexis" characteristic of later life stages is, in this case, an honorable retreat. Yet, the "narcissistic entitlement" that Huberman identified among the teachers withdrawing rather happily into the classroom implies a shift toward personal inwardness. "Tending one's own garden" is ambiguous: We do not know whether the primary referent of intentional activity is the classroom (the plants well-tended being one's pupils) or the teacher as a person (one's preferences being cultivated and one's self flourishing). Regardless of feeling tone, unspecified inwardness can go either way.

To speak of "professional development," one has to separate a shift of attention from extramural to internal classroom concerns from a retreat into the self. The stories of Miss Brodie and Miss Jacobs show that there is a world of difference between taking personal inwardness to be the measure of things in teaching and taking the classroom to be one's lively theatre of thought and action. While the second form of interiority is appropriately local and consistent with professional role and development, as well as a (bottom up, not top down) improvement of teaching and schools, the first one is not.

The distinction between personal and professional interiority is a conceptual distinction with a sharp normative edge that helps to sort out, descriptively, life-cycle changes from professional development. The edge of this distinction cuts into taken-for-granted beliefs of educational researchers and reformers who note with some astonishment, shading into disapproval, teachers' consistent statements that they look at their work and its rewards in terms of their classrooms and their students.[66] An assumption is that teachers ought to care about more than cultivating their own gardens, that they ought to adopt larger concerns, moving beyond the classroom to institutions and far-flung social and political agendas.

Confounding Professional Development with Changing One's Vocation

Underlying these beliefs and expectations are narrow conceptions of the kinds of roles that morally sensitive persons may confidently adopt and that just societies must allow. If a surgeon tells us that she sees the operating theatre, and her patient on the table, as the most important arena for her actions and concerns, we would think that more than all right. In fact, we would worry if it were otherwise. For a doctor, the realm of excellence is healing,

for a teacher, teaching. Leading the good life of a doctor, lawyer, or teacher means bestowing one's resources and energies on designated persons in order to benefit them in the specific ways consonant with one's line of work.

The opposite of far-flung benevolence, it is the mark of these professions that they "constrain us to pursue goods more limited than the general good."[67] Consider the classic statement of a lawyer's loyalty by Lord Brougham: "An advocate, in the discharge of his duty, knows but one person in all the world, and that person is his client."[68] Teachers' loyalties, while not limited to single clients, are as appropriately parochial. As immediate helpers, teachers should devote to any projects remote from their classrooms precisely as much of their energies and resources as the educational interests and human flourishing of their students demand--and not the other way around, giving to their classrooms as much attention as they can conveniently spare from far-flung agendas, without interfering with those. In ordinary circumstances, ignoring or neglecting the interests of one's clients in the pursuit of "land reforms" is a breach of professional duties.

If a professional version of inwardness is for teachers to teach and leave everything alone that interferes rather than helps with that central task, expectations and reforms directing teachers' thoughts and actions too far away from the classroom may be confounding professional development with changing one's vocation. If teachers are not local heroes, can they be heroes at all? In this context, Huberman's findings concerning predictors of abiding teacher satisfaction should receive serious attention:

> Teachers who steered clear of reforms or other multiple-classroom innovations, but who invested consistently in classroom-level experiments--what they called "tinkering" with new materials, different pupil groupings, small changes in grading systems--were more likely to be satisfied later on in their career than most others, and far more likely to be satisfied than their peers who had been heavily involved in schoolwide or districtwide projects. So tinkering, together with

> an early concern for instructional efficiency ("getting it down into a routine, getting the materials right for most situations I run into"), was one of the strongest predictors of ultimate satisfaction.[69]

There is no paradox in claiming that <u>some</u> forms of inwardness, of "being situated within," are consistent with improving teaching and schools, although the idea of teachers puttering around in their classrooms, putting things into working order, and making small-scale changes may be unpalatable to outsiders given to grander schemes and superior images of human agency. Yet it does not follow that what is grander in scope or style, and higher in status, is also more appropriate, good, or right. Conversely, the putterers may be looking at the stars. This is not to deny, therefore, the benefits of being personally invested in a larger and higher view of one's work. To the contrary, the idea of contemplation that I have advanced implies <u>raising one's sights</u> to children, subject matter, and ideals of perfection in teaching, while avoiding theories that blind. Enlargement and personal investment must not undermine the integrity of the role, however, putting clients at risk or selling them short. As Martin Buber says:

> Every form of relation in which the spirit's service of life is realized has its special objectivity, its structure of proportions and limits which in no way resists the fervour of personal comprehension and penetration, though it does resist any confusion with the person's own spheres. If this structure and its resistance are not respected then a dilettantism will prevail which claims to be aristocratic, though in reality it is unsteady and feverish.[70]

To teach one's pupils with loyalty and care, moved by their plights as learners, is a morally good life. So is working for institutions that are more just and for a better social order. The point is that these are endeavors with different scopes, devotions, and excellences. Confounding professional development with a transformation that makes teachers more like people who would not want to be classroom teachers is cockeyed, and not productive of good policy:

> Indeed, the illusion that anyone can escape from the marks of his vocation is an aspect of romanticism . . . ; those occupied with the world of action claiming their true interests to lie in the pleasure of imagination or reflection, while persons principally concerned with reflective or imaginative pursuits are forever asserting their inalienable right to participation in an active sphere.[71]

The irony is that the mischievous illusion at issue does not derive from teachers' tendencies to mistake the marks of their profession, but from the self-centered misapprehensions of reformers, forever asserting teachers' rights and duties to advance into spheres outside of the classroom. Attaching a false meaning to professional development in teaching is unlikely to improve schools.

Notes

[1]Thomas F. Green, "The Formation of Conscience in an Age of Technology," American Journal of Education 94, no. 1 (November 1985): 3-4.

[2]See Idem, "The Economy of Virtue and the Primacy of Prudence," American Journal of Education 96, no. 2 (February 1988): 127-42.

[3]Rebecca West, This Real Night (London: Macmillan, 1984), p. 124.

[4]Ibid, pp. 124-25.

[5]See Magdalene Lampert, "How Do Teachers Manage to Teach? Perspectives on Problems in Practice," Harvard Educational Review 55, no. 2 (May 1985): 178-94; Ruth Barcan Marcus, "Moral Dilemmas and Consistency," The Journal of Philosophy 77, no. 3 (March 1980): 121-36; and Margret Buchmann, "Argument and Contemplation in Teaching," Oxford Review of Education 14, no. 2 (1988): 201-14.

[6]William James, "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life," in The Moral Philosophy of William James ed. John K. Roth (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1969, originally published 1891), p. 188.

[7]Ibid., p. 187.

[8]See Margret Buchmann, "Breaking from Experience in Teacher Education: When Is It Necessary? How Is It Possible?" Oxford Review of Education 15, no. 2 (1989): 181-95.

[9]Green, "The Formation of Conscience," p. 25.

[10]For reviews of the relevant empirical literature in the United States, see Christopher M. Clark and Penelope L. Peterson, "Teachers' Thought Processes," in Handbook of Research on Teaching, ed. Merlin C. Wittrock (New York: Macmillan, 1986), pp. 255-96; and Christopher M. Clark, "Ten Years of Conceptual Development in Research on Teacher Thinking," in Advances of Research on Teacher Thinking, ed. M. Ben-Peretz, R. Bromme, and R. Halkes (Lisse, the Netherlands: Swets and Zeitlinger B.V., 1986), pp. 7-20. For a philosophical blueprint for teachers' arguments, see Gary D. Fenstermacher, "Philosophy of Research on Teaching: Three Aspects," in Handbook of Research on Teaching, ed. Wittrock, pp. 37-49; and for criticisms of this blueprint's preconceptions and helpfulness in research and teacher education, see, for example, Margret Buchmann, "Impractical Philosophizing about Teachers' Arguments," Educational Theory 37, no. 4 (Fall 1987): 409-11: Jere Confrey, "Bridging Research and Practice," Educational Theory 37, no. 4 (Fall 1987): 383-94; and Hugh Munby, "The Dubious Place of Practical Arguments and Scientific Knowledge in the Thinking of Teachers," Educational Theory 37, no. 4 (Fall 1984): 361-68.

[11]See Charles Fried, Right and Wrong (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

[12]Stuart Hampshire, Thought and Action (London: Chatto and Windus, 1982), p. 192.

[13]Israel Scheffler, "On the Education of Policymakers," Harvard Educational Review 54, no. 2 (May 1984): 162.

[14]F. H. Bradley, "The Vulgar Notion of Responsibility in Connexion with the Theories of Free-Will and Necessity," in his Ethical Studies, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927, originally published 1876), p. 9.

[15]See Buchmann, "Argument and Contemplation in Teaching."

[16]Adina Schwartz, "Aristotle on Education and Choice," Educational Theory 29, no. 2 (Spring 1979): 102.

[17]See ibid., passim.

[18]James, "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life, p. 186.

[19]See Fried, "Rights and Roles," in his Right and Wrong, pp. 167-94.

[20]See F. H. Bradley, "My Station and Its Duties," in his Ethical Studies, pp. 160-206.

[21]Fried, Right and Wrong, p. 189.

[22]See Green, "The Formation of Conscience"; and Idem, "The Economy of Virtue."

[23]On the concept of fidelity in teaching and research, see Nel Noddings, "Fidelity in Teaching, Teacher Education, and Research for Teaching," Harvard Educational Review 56, no. 4 (November 1986): 496-510.

[24]Fried, "Rights and Wrong, p. 194.

[25]See Margret Buchmann, "Role over Person: Morality and Authenticity in Teaching," Teachers College Record 87, no. 4 (Summer 1986): 529-43.

[26]Richard Wollheim, The Thread of Life (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 2.

[27]See Scheffler, "On the Education of Policymakers."

[28]Green, "The Economy of Virtue," p. 140; see also Scheffler, "On the Education of Policymakers."

[29]See Margret Buchmann, "The Careful Vision: How Practical Is Contemplation in Teaching?" American Journal of Education, 98, no. 1 (November 1989): 35-61.

[30]See Saint Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, vol. 46, Action and Contemplation (2a2ae. 179-82) (New York: Blackfriars, 1966).

[31]Ibid, p. 83.

[32]See Ibid, Appendix 6, pp. 117-19.

[33]Saint Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, vol. 47, The Pastoral and Religious Lives (2a2ae.183-9) (New York: Blackfriars, 1973), p. 205.

[34]See Jerome Bruner, "Two Modes of Thought," in his Actual Minds, Possible Worlds, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 11-43.

[35]See Robert Coles, The Call of Stories: Teaching and the Moral Imagination (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989).

[36]See Martha C. Nussbaum, "The Vulnerability of the Good Human Life: Activity and Disaster," in her The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 318-34L.

[37]Iris Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good (London: Ark, 1970), p. 87.

[38]See Simone Weil, "Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God," in The Simone Weil Reader, eds. George A. Panichas (New York: David McKay, 1977), pp. 44-52.

[39]See Wolfgang Iser, "Interaction between Reader and Text," in The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation, ed. Susan Suleiman and Inge Crosman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 106-19.

[40]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p. 103.

[41]West, This Real Night, pp. 67-68.

[42]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p. 65.

[43]Coles, The Call of Stories, p. 25.

[44]Ibid., p. 9.

[45]Ibid., p. 14.

[46]Ibid., p. 7, emphasis in original.

[47]Ibid., p. 19.

[48]Scheffler, "On the Education of Policymakers," p. 164.

[49]See also Buchmann, "The Careful Vision."

[50]Nussbaum, The Fragility of Goodness, p. 357.

[51]Weil, "Reflections on the Right Use," p. 51.

[52]Josiah Royce, "The Philosophy of Loyalty," in The Basic Writings of Josiah Royce, ed. John J. McDermott, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969, originally published 1908), p. 958.

[53]Muriel Spark, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1961), p. 16.

[54]Ibid., p. 18.

[55]Ibid., p. 111.

[56]Ibid., p. 122.

[57]Ibid., p. 92.

[58]Ibid., p. 46.

[59]Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good, p. 59.

[60]See, for example, Philip A. Cusick, The Egalitarian Ideal and the American High School: Studies of Three Schools (New York: Longman, 1983); and Michael W. Sedlak, Christopher W. Wheeler, Diana C. Pullin, & Philip A. Cusick, Selling Students Short: Classroom Bargains and Academic Reform in the American High School (New York: Teachers College Press, 1986).

[61]See Margret Buchmann, "What Is Irrational about Knowledge Utilization" Curriculum Inquiry 15, no. 2 (Summer 1985): 153-68.

[62]See Sharon Feiman and Robert E. Floden, "A Consumer's Guide to Teacher Development," Journal of Staff Development, no. 2 (1980): 126-47; and Robert E. Floden and Sharon Feiman, A Developmental Approach to the Study of Teacher Change: What's to Be Gained? Research Series No. 93 (East Lansing, Mich.: Institute for Research on Teaching, 1981); recall also Coles, The Call of Stories.

[63]Michael Huberman, "Teacher Careers and School Improvement," Journal of Curriculum Studies 20, no. 2 (March-April 1988), p. 127.

[64]See ibid; see also Michael Huberman, "The Professional Life Cycle of Teachers," Teachers College Record 91, no. 1 (Fall 1989): 31-57.

[65]Huberman, "The Professional Life Cycle of Teachers," p. 49.

[66]For an exhaustive discussion of the North American literature, see Sharon Feiman-Nemser and Robert E. Floden, "The Cultures of Teaching," in Handbook of Research on Teaching, ed. Wittrock, pp. 505-26.

[67]Fried, Right and Wrong, p. 168.

[68]Cited ibid., p. 177.

[69]Huberman, "The Professional Life Cycle of Teachers," pp. 50-51. On the primacy of prudence in moral learning, see also Green, "The Economy of Virtue."

[70]Martin Buber, Between Man and Man (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954), p. 95.

[71]Anthony Powell, "The Acceptance World," in Anthony Powell, A Dance to the Music of Time, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1955), p. 38.